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28 December 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BUNDY

SUBJECT: Alert Posture for Forces Committed to Cuban Operations

1. In the attached memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend, with respect to Cuba, "a further reduction to approximately normal readiness levels. . . ." Paragraphs 2. a. (1) and 2. a. (2) did not strike me as being too clear, so I have spoken with the action officer who prepared the paper. What it means is that, if the Secretary approves the JCS recommendations, high-level reconnaissance flights will continue on an average of two per day; low level flights, however, will be ready to go on 12-hour alert for four aircraft, and 24-hour alert for eight aircraft.

L. J. Legere
L. J. Legere

Attachment:
JCSM-1021-62 dtd 26 Dec 62

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E.O. 11652, SEC. 3(E), 5(D), 5(E) AND 11

NLK-75-170 NSC
BY 3CA NARS, DATE 1-3-79

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

C.C. Command
J-3

JCSM-1021-62
26 December 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Reassessment of the Alert Posture for Forces
Committed to Cuban Operations

1. With your approval, the reduced readiness levels for forces committed to Cuban operations, as contained in JCSM-955-62, dated 28 November 1962, subject: "Readiness Posture Requirements", were placed in effect on 28 November 1962. In light of the Soviet withdrawal of the IL-28 aircraft from Cuba and a continuing reassessment of the Cuban situation, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that a further reduction to approximately normal readiness levels should be effected.
2. Accordingly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider the following alert posture criteria to be appropriate at this time.

a. Overflight reconnaissance

(1) High Level. Alert posture which will permit an average of two U-2 flights per day cumulative from 21 November, and not more than a maximum of five U-2 flights on any one day.

(2) Low Level. Four aircraft on 12 hour alert and eight aircraft on 24-hour alert, and similar readiness for all aircraft which support the foregoing reconnaissance missions (i.e., Fighter escort, CAP, SAR, ELINT, etc.).

b. Reimposition of the quarantine of Cuba: 72 hours.

c. Partial or full implementation of CINCLANT OPLAN 312-62: 72 hours.

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d. Execution of CINCLANT OPLAN 316-62: 18 days

e. Air Defense: Resume normal posture with the exception of those air defense forces currently deployed in the Florida - Key West area.

f. Strategic Forces: Maintenance of normal alert levels.

3. Changes in current criteria effected by adoption of the above are deletion of (1) a 24-hour alert posture for local reprisal strike aircraft, and (2) a 48-hour alert posture for attacks on SAM sites, IL-28's, and/or all air defenses in Cuba, and inclusion of these OPLAN 312-62 optional missions in the 72-hour alert time frame of paragraph 2 c above. In this connection, it is considered that any partial or full implementation of OPLAN 312-62 should be predicated not only upon the capability of US forces to conduct air strikes but also upon the time required to reinforce Guantanamo and to evacuate dependents therefrom. As any US act of reprisal probably would generate a Cuban counter-reprisal, with Guantanamo a likely target, a 72-hour period between a decision to strike and S-Hour of any version of OPLAN 312-62 would provide time for the initial reinforcement of the naval base and more than adequate time for evacuation of dependents.

4. With regard to paragraph 2 e above, air defense forces currently deployed to Southeast United States, unless replaced by units of similar capabilities, will be retained in present positions until receipt and resolution of CINCONAD's recommended requirements for the permanent air defense of Southeast United States. CINCONAD's recommendations on this matter are expected by 2 January 1963.

5. Your approval of the alert posture criteria as set forth in paragraph 2 above, is recommended as a basis for further action by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

(SIGNED)

MAXWELL D. TAYLOR
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff